

Remarks:

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the final Office action dated October 18, 2004.

Prior to entry of the present amendments, claims 1-10 were pending in this application. Claims 2-6 have been allowed. Claim 10 has been indicated allowable if placed in independent form to include the subject matter of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 10 has been so-amended.

Claims 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on Kluchi et al. (JP 63-41169). Although applicants do not necessarily concede to the applicability of the rejection, in the interest of furthering prosecution of the present application, claims 8 and 9 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims:

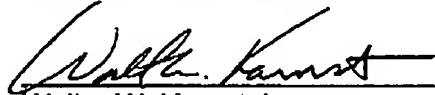
Regarding the Examiner's "statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter," applicants note that the Examiner has paraphrased the language of the claims. While applicants agree with the Examiner's conclusion regarding patentability of claims 2-6 and 10, they do not necessarily agree with or acquiesce in the Examiner's reasoning. In particular, applicants believe that the application is allowable because the prior art fails to teach or suggest the invention as claimed, independent of how the invention is paraphrased.

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If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to Examiner D. Colilla, Group Art Unit 2854, Assistant Commissioner for Patents, at facsimile number (703) 872-9306 on November 22, 2004.



Christie A. Doolittle

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